

Collinsville his home, and we are glad he does.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT SOCIAL SECURITY?

(Mr. WYNN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, now that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have finished beating up on the President, perhaps we can deal with the real business of America. The most important issue facing us is what to do about Social Security.

We will hear my colleagues talk about big government and bad government, but the reality is that it was the government and the Democrats in Congress who gave us Social Security. We need to take strong steps to ensure its solvency.

The Democrats, along with President Clinton, have laid out a reasonable framework which says we will save the surplus for Social Security. Sixty-two percent of the surplus should go to preserving Social Security through the year 2055.

In addition, we want to save Medicare. We want to take an additional 15 percent of the surplus to make sure that Medicare remains solvent through the year 2025.

We have put forth on the table a framework for addressing the problems that really confront America, addressing the problems of our growing senior citizen population. On the Republican side, they are still trying to figure out what they want to do on tax cuts, tax cuts for the very wealthy.

We can spend money on our seniors or we can spend it on the very wealthy.

PRESIDENT HAS NO AUTHORITY TO WAGE WAR WITHOUT CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL

(Mr. PAUL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, the threats of bombing did not bring a peace agreement to Kosovo. The President has no authority to wage war, and yet Congress says nothing.

When will Congress assume its war power authority to rein in the President? An endless military occupation of Bosnia is ignored by Congress, and the spending rolls on, and yet there is no lasting peace.

For 9 years, bombing Iraq and killing innocent Iraqi children with sanctions has done nothing to restore stability to Iraq, but it has served to instill an ever-growing hatred toward America. It is now clear that the threats of massive bombing of Serbia have not brought peace to Kosovo.

Congress must assume its responsibility. It must be made clear that the

President has no funds available to wage war without congressional approval. This is our prerogative. Therefore, the endless threats of bombing should cease. Congress should not remain timid.

Merely telling the President to reconsider his actions will have little effect. We must be firm and deny the funds to wage war without our consent. We live in a republic, not a monarchy.

CONGRATULATING THE VFW ON ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. HILL of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HILL of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I cannot begin to tell my colleagues how proud I am to be here in the seat that Lee Hamilton held for 34 years.

As a new member of the House Armed Services Committee, I know that we owe a lot to those who currently serve our country and also to those who served in the past.

This year, one of the Nation's oldest and most distinguished service organizations, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, celebrates its 100-year anniversary. This week, I will introduce a resolution calling on the Postal Service to issue a stamp to congratulate veterans of foreign wars for a century of work on behalf of our fighting men and women. It is the least we can do to honor those who have given us so much.

I also want to thank all the veterans back in Indiana and those who continue to contact me. I want to contact people like Elsie Foster of the Ladies' Auxiliary in New Albany whose four brothers served during World War II and whose husband served in the World War II and Korean War. Mrs. Foster, I want you to know that it was your request that convinced me to demand the stamp.

MARRIAGE TAX ELIMINATION ACT

(Mr. WELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, let me ask a very basic and fundamental question: Is it right, is it fair that under our Tax Code that our Tax Code discriminates against married, working couples by forcing married, working couples to pay higher taxes just because they are married? Is it right that under our Tax Code that 21 million married, working couples pay on average \$1,400 more in higher taxes just because they are married, \$1,400 more than an identical working couple that lives together outside of marriage?

That is wrong. \$1,400 on the south side of the Chicago in the south suburbs of Illinois is 1 year's tuition in a

local community college. It is 3 months of day care at a local child care center. \$1,400 is real money.

My colleagues, I believe that we should make fairness and simplicity a goal as we work to make changes in the Tax Code. Let us make elimination of the discrimination against married, working couples a priority.

The Marriage Tax Elimination Act now has 230 cosponsors, a bipartisan majority of this House. Let us make it the centerpiece of this year's balanced budget.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE ARE BEDROCK

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, the United States Census projects that in the next 25 years the size of America's elderly population will grow by more than 50 percent. This means that during our lifetime, Social Security and Medicare will face serious financial strain. In light of these facts, we must do what is necessary and what is fair and responsible, use the budget surplus to protect Social Security and Medicare while we still have the means.

These two programs are bedrock. Two-thirds of our seniors rely on Social Security for over half their income. In the 30 years since its inception, Medicare has raised the percentage of seniors with health insurance from less than half to 99 percent. These two programs are important and currently too financially vulnerable to be ignored for a one-time tax break.

Democrats want to dedicate 77 percent of the surplus to save Medicare and Social Security. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership disagrees. The Republican tax plan is silent on Medicare. What we need to do is to be ready to work to save and protect Social Security and Medicare. Let us use this historic surplus to do just that.

THERE IS NO BUDGET SURPLUS, THERE IS SOCIAL SECURITY SURPLUS

(Mr. CAMPBELL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. Speaker, there is no budget surplus. There is no budget surplus. There is a Social Security surplus. It is \$125.5 billion, and we ought to use it for Social Security. There is a deficit in the budget if you do not count Social Security, and that deficit is \$12 billion.

It just is not right to go with spending plans, no matter how well-intentioned, when the source of those spending plans is Social Security. If my colleagues support, as the President does,

increased college loans for students, and as the Speaker knows, I teach at a university, I would be one of the first to support it the moment we have a budget surplus. But I cannot support it. Nor can I support across-the-board tax cuts if the money comes from the Social Security surplus.

Let us make sure the Social Security surplus is spent for Social Security. And when the day comes, hosanna, that we have an honest budget surplus, we can have a debate between tax cuts and new spending plans. That day is not yet at hand.

MEDICARE AND SOCIAL SECURITY ARE TWO MOST POPULAR FEDERAL PROGRAMS

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I do not need to tell this body that Medicare and Social Security are the two most popular Federal programs, with good reason. The need has been long established and the people who benefit or their survivors have paid their dues to build this society.

These programs are in effect twins, but they were born about 30 years apart. We have been talking a lot about the eldest of the twins, Social Security, but we must not forget or neglect the other twin, the Medicare twin.

Time will run out sooner with Medicare than with Social Security. We have about 10 years to make sure that Medicare is there for everyone who needs it. We should devote 15 percent of the surplus to making sure with a bipartisan commitment not only to Social Security but going the rest of the way to Medicare.

The only thing that could get us in more trouble with the American people than letting Social Security drift into bankruptcy is not fixing Medicare. Let us do it together.

PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL ON SOCIAL SECURITY DOES NOT DO WHAT THEY SAY IT WILL DO

(Mr. LINDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, to sit and listen to all these wonderful speeches about saving Medicare and Social Security is a wonderful thing, but the President's proposal does not do what they say it is going to do. The President's proposal does not change structurally Social Security and Medicare. It just puts a bunch of cash in after a system that is failing because fewer people are going to work and more people are retiring.

Indeed, the President's budget borrows \$800 billion out of the Social Security Trust over the next 10 years and puts IOUs in its place. Is that not what

we have been doing for the last 30 years? Is that not what we are trying to get out of, borrowing from Social Security and putting IOUs in place?

Indeed, the President's budget increases spending by a trillion dollars over 10 years and adds \$800 billion to the national debt. This is hardly saving anything. If we want to save Social Security and Medicare, we are going to have to make structural reforms, structural reforms that extend not into the next 10 years but in the next generation and beyond.

Allowing workers to put their own money into investments over time will do that, and the President is not proposing that at all.

HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY TO USE BUDGET SURPLUS FOR OUR SENIORS

(Mr. MARKEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, we have an historic opportunity. There is going to be, by all estimates, a budget surplus over the next 15 years. We can use that money for our seniors and say to them they do not have to worry again about whether or not Social Security is solvent; they do not have to worry again as to whether or not Medicare will be there for their health care bills.

But what the Republicans say is they want a 10 percent across-the-board tax cut. They want to return the money back into the pockets of ordinary people.

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Well, Mr. Speaker, in 1997, structural reforms in Medicare and home health care resulted in a diminishing capacity to deal with the problems of the seniors in our country. In my own little area, instead of the 450,000 home visits for seniors who have a spouse with Alzheimer's or with Parkinson's, now this year only 270,000 visits.

That is what restructuring does. It reduces the benefit.

Let us save Medicare with the surplus.

SOCIAL SECURITY IS GOING BANKRUPT

(Mr. COOKSEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COOKSEY. Mr. Speaker, perhaps the first question that needs to be asked is:

Why does Social Security need to be saved?

The response, of course, is that Social Security is going bankrupt.

But the real question then becomes:

Why is Social Security going bankrupt?

The answer, as everyone knows, is because the baby boom generation will begin to retire in about 13 years.

But then the real question becomes:

Why should that matter? What kind of a system is it that goes bankrupt depending upon demographics, which is to say the number of people retiring compared to the number of workers?

It is a good thing that private insurance companies are not run that way. They are not run that way because to do so would be to run an illegal pyramid scheme.

Pyramid schemes are illegal for a good reason. They are positively guaranteed to go bankrupt.

Democrats and Republicans are waking up to the reality of a system that should need saving but that does. We should work together to produce a system that works for everyone, young and old alike.

ELIMINATE THE MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, a lot of Americans look at what the government does and conclude that many of the things that it does simply make no sense. The marriage tax penalty certainly falls into that category. The Federal Government has actually set up a system that makes married couples pay more in taxes than couples that live together but are not married.

When people shake their heads when they hear about the latest crazy scheme coming out of Washington, Mr. Speaker, this is exactly the kind of thing that they have in mind.

There is no telling what absurd rationale the social engineers had in mind when they set up the marriage tax penalty, but Americans with common sense think it is time finally for some accountability. It is time to get rid of this dumb idea of taxing people more just because they get married. It is time to bring a little middle America common sense to a tax code that is an affront to the common sense of American citizens, and it is time that we reduce taxes for all Americans across the board.

Mr. Speaker, we are just overtaxing this country. Let us finally do something about it and lower taxes.

PRESERVE AND PROTECT SOCIAL SECURITY

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, what is it that the President wants to do with 38 percent of the Social Security funds?

There is a surplus in Social Security. The President is supporting taking 38 percent of that money and spending it on non-Social Security programs.

One of those programs is to expand AmeriCorps. AmeriCorps is a program